

**Special  
Olympics**  
Ontario



Special Olympics  
**Unified Champion  
Schools®**

# 2024-2025 Season School Qualifiers



**Floorball Technical Package**  
Unified & Traditional



# SOO School Qualifiers Floorball 4-on-4 Rules

## 1. Qualifier Competition Format

*\*Note: SOO Floorball Qualifiers require 3 players plus a goalie to be on the court at all times\**

### 1a. Game Points and Team Ranking

- Round Robin Format within your division
  - Game Points Scoring System:
    - 3 points for a win.
    - 1 point for a tie.
  - Tie breakers at qualifiers to be determined in succession:
    - Highest game points (based on the scoring system outlined above)
    - Head-to-Head
    - Lowest points against average
    - Random Computerized Draw
  - In the event of a three-way tie, once a team has been eliminated from the tie, the tie-breaking process for the remaining two teams will start at the beginning.
- For qualification for Provincial School Championships, all teams are placed in **a conference** with schools from the surrounding regions, **meaning that schools are competing against all other schools within their conference, not only teams at their local qualifier**. All tie-breaking processes remain the same. This model allows for equitable chances of qualification despite the size of the local qualifier. To learn more about the qualifying process, our quotas for the year and our conference model, please visit our Schools Hub on our website: [Schools Hub](#)

### 1b. Uniforms

- All teams must supply their own uniforms. T-shirts or sports uniforms are permitted as long as all uniforms are identical for all players. Numbers on uniforms are not required.
- Indoor gym shoes are required footwear for this competition.

### 1c. Equipment

- Each player on the court is **required to use an [International Floorball Federation \(IFF\) approved](#)** Floorball stick. Floor Hockey or other sticks will not be permitted. Each participating school can receive **6 free sticks and whiffle balls from Special Olympics Ontario**. If required, please contact the school's team.
  - Stick lengths should be suited for each athlete's height and orientation (see Appendix A below)
- Each game must be played with an IFF-approved **Whiffle Ball**. Schools do not need to bring balls to the qualifiers; they will be provided by SOO and/or the host school.
  - **For safety, helmets are not permitted, except for those playing goalie**
- Goalkeepers:
  - **Are not permitted to use a stick** (goalies can use their hands and legs to block within their crease)
  - Are required to wear a Canadian Safety Association (CSA) or IFF approved caged helmet.
  - Long pants with proper leg protectors (knee pads (of any kind), shin guards or traditional hockey leg pads)
  - Gloves or a traditional hockey blocker and catcher
  - A chest protector (usually found in traditional floor hockey goalie sets)
    - **Note SOO will provide teams with goalie equipment at their respective qualifiers upon request. Teams must provide this information at registration at least one week prior to the event**
      - **If required, goalie equipment will be sent directly to the host school; if the host school can't provide goalie equipment for**



### respective participating teams (each court will have goalie equipment)

- SOO will allow traditional floor hockey protective goalie gear that was used in past years to be used or official floorball equipment can be used (see Appendix A below)
- The goal net will be a standard floor hockey net (roughly 160cm high and 115 cm wide)
- Games are played indoors in gymnasiums (about 36m X 18m in length and width). **Single gyms and double gyms are both suitable for play.** Courts can be a maximum size of 40 X 22m. Boards (school benches) will be used on each court where possible.
  - Benches will be placed in the corners outside the court and not directly behind the net
  - There will be an established **center line** in the middle of the court.
  - There will also be a **1 X 2.5 m goalie crease where only the goalie is allowed** (this is important for safety as well as fair play)
    - (gym lines, tape or cones can be used to create center lines and creases)
  - **Goalkeepers must stay within 5m of the net at all times**
    - Goalies can only use their hands within those 5 meters

### Recommended/Optional Safety Equipment (Not Required)

- Sport goggles
- Shin Pads
- Gloves
- Mouth Guard

## 1d. Game Forfeit

- Should a team forfeit a game, the following point allocation will be used:
  - The game has not started; a score of 1-0 will be recorded.
  - The game started: The non-forfeiting team's score will be recorded as 1, or their current score at the time of the forfeit will be added to that number of 1, and the forfeiting team's score will be the current score when the forfeit occurred.

## 2. Rules of Play

### 2a. Divisions

- The Head Coach must include a team ranking during online registration for each team.
  - Team rankings are meant as an overall rating of your team ability. Refer to our [Skill Assessments](#) if needed and make a judgement on your teams overall competitive ability. A - Indicates your team is established, has several strong players and would be placed in the most competitive division, B - Team has an all-around understanding of the sport would be placed with some higher level teams, C - Middle of the pack team that has basic skills down for most players, D - Means your athletes are learning the sport and would be placed in the lowest ability division
- Traditional
  - Recreational: Teams in the recreational category have athletes who are relatively new to the sport or are just there for fun and do not want to compete/advance to the 2024 School Championships.
  - Competitive: Competitive Traditional athletes intend to compete at the School Championships if selected or have a mid-high skill level.
- Unified
  - Unified Partners are there to compete alongside SO Athletes. Unified Partners are **intended to score points, impact the game in a meaningful way** and compete in this category. This includes passing, shooting/scoring and defence. **Note: Unified Partners are not permitted to take over games but are expected to contribute.**
    - Teams are grouped in divisions according to their team ranking (A,B,C,D)



- Each team will be required to ensure all their players barring injury play during each game.

## 2b. Team and Players

- Traditional teams: minimum **4 and maximum 8 athletes** with an ID (4 players and 4 substitutes).
- Unified teams: **minimum 4 and maximum 8 athletes** (a Unified roster is permitted to have a **maximum of 3 mainstream Unified partners and a minimum of 1**).
- During the competition, the 4 person team on the court must be made up of 3 athletes with an ID and 1 Unified Partner. Unified teams must have a minimum of three SOO Traditional athletes to start and finish each game.
- 4 v 4 floorball includes three field players plus one goalie. Each team must start the game with four players or forfeit the game. If a team falls below four players due to injury once the game has started, the team will be permitted to continue with three players on the court. If a team falls below four players due to player ejection, the team will forfeit that game. Note: Unified Partners can play goalie.

## 2c. Unified Sport/Teams

- Unified Sports brings people with intellectual challenges and disabilities together on the same team as people without intellectual disabilities. This program is dedicated to promoting inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences.
- Unified Sports looks to develop **meaningful competition** where coaches work together to create a balanced competitive environment. **Coaches are responsible for ensuring the meaningful involvement of all players in the game.**
- Please review our principle of meaningful involvement to understand and apply the Unified Competition Model: [SO Unified Sports Principle of Meaningful Involvement](#)
- Also, see our Unified Coaching Guides and Training Resources
  - [Guiding Unified Sport Principles](#)
  - [Unified Sports Coach Guidelines](#)
  - [Unified Coach Course \(Option A\)](#)
  - [Unified Coaching Course \(Option B\)](#)

## 2d. The Game

- The game will be played for **20 minutes**, with **two 10-minute periods**. A **two-minute 'halftime' break will** occur between the first and second half of play.
  - A **running clock will be applied** for the full 20 minutes. The clock may stop at the referee's discretion.
  - **One 60-second timeout is allowed per team per game**. When a timeout is called, the clock will be stopped.
- A team will be declared the winner if they reach **10 goals**. The full 20-minute **game time should played**, but the score will stand once one team scores its tenth goal. Thus, the winning team is the first team to score ten goals or the team with the highest score after the 20-minute game.
- The game begins with a faceoff at center court. Both centermen stand across from one another, blades facing forward, and sticks on either side of the ball. The ball is in play at the referee's whistle, and players attempt to win the faceoff. The second half will also begin with a faceoff.
- All games will be played with an IFF-approved Whiffle Ball (72mm in diameter and 23 grams in weight).
- **Teams will not change ends after each period.**
- **Substitutions:** Coaches can make substitutions after any whistle, including balls going out of bounds, goals, after a timeout, after a penalty and after halftime. Officials will whistle in substitutions.



- Note: During play, **coaches and support staff cannot participate in the competition** in any way beyond physically supporting individuals who need one-on-one support or guidance to compete (**cannot participate in active play**).
  - If a coach participates in the game, the team will be given a **technical foul** and free hit for each infraction.

## 2e. Competition

### 1. Goals/Scoring

- A goal shall be counted when the entire ball has legally passed between the goal posts below the crossbar and completely across the goal line.
- **Players can stop the ball with their feet but** can't touch the ball consecutively with their feet. **Players can pass with their feet, but it is illegal for an offensive player to kick the ball into the goal.** The goal shall NOT be allowed if the ball has been kicked, thrown or otherwise deliberately directed into the goal by any means other than a stick.
- No player, except the goalkeeper, shall stand in the goal crease, on the goal line, nor hold his/her stick in the goal crease. If a goal is scored while such conditions prevail, it will not be counted. However, if the defending player violates the goal crease while the goal is about to be scored, the goal will stand. This rule will be a judgment call by the officials on the floor.
- **Each goal will count for one point.**
- Games tied at the end of playing time will stand. **There will be no overtime at regional qualifiers.**
- After a save, goalies can throw or roll the ball; however, if bouncing, the ball must bounce on their half of the court before landing in the opponent's end.

### 2. Faceoffs

Shall Occur:

- **To begin the game** and each period at the center floor faceoff circle;
  - **After each goal** at the center floor faceoff circle,
  - After each penalty box foul at the offending team's defensive end
  - After **each stoppage of play** during a period, the faceoff will occur at the nearest faceoff circle,
  - In a situation where both teams receive penalties, the faceoff shall be at the nearest faceoff spot to the actual stoppage in play
  - When an unsafe condition exists, that requires a stoppage of play
  - If the ball goes out of bounce and it is inconclusive who touched it last
- a) The players taking the "faceoff" shall stand squarely facing their opponent's end of the floor. All players must be "on-side," with no player within 1.8 m (6ft.) of the players facing off.
  - b) The players facing off and their sticks must be an equal distance from the puck, 30 cm (1 ft.) from the center of the faceoff spot.
  - c) Play is put in motion when the referee blows his/her whistle.

### 3. Ball-Out of Play

- If teams are playing within a standard floorball court (with boards), oftentimes, the ball will be hit out of bounds. If this happens, **the opposing team will start with the ball in a stationary position** just inside the court where the ball exited the field of play.
  - The player can then either shoot to score or pass but **cannot directly carry the ball (move with the ball) from that point of inbound play**. The defending team **must keep a distance of at least three (3) meters**.



#### 4. Key Rules/Safety Best Practices

- Players should be aware of the rules and that they must be considerate of others on the court
  - **Sticks must remain below the knee when playing the ball and shooting.**
    - the stick must remain below the waist at all times (including backswing and follow-through)
  - **It is a non-contact sport**, so body checking is not permitted
    - **No body contact should occur at any time**
      - no blocking/screening of the opposite player
      - no stick-on-body contact or stick-on-stick contact
- Equipment should be checked prior to the game:
  - The nets are fully intact, with no loose screws or rust.
  - Sticks are not broken (screws between blade and shaft are tight, and blades are not broken)
  - In a gymnasium without floorball boards, make sure to clear all objects from the court (benches, chairs, etc.) and that floor plugs are in place.
  - Goalie equipment and helmets are on and secured properly
  - Implement a crease for the protection of the goalie
    - No other player's stick is allowed in the crease.

#### 5. Fouls & Penalties

##### Free Hits

1. When an offence has occurred, free hits are awarded to the opponents, and penalties are given if they are severe enough. A free hit is essentially a free kick in soccer, where the awarded team takes possession of the ball at the place of the offence. Players can pass or shoot from the spot once the ball is stationary, with the defenders (3) three meters back. Free hits will occur when:
  - Grabbing the ball with your hand or hitting it with your head (Goaltenders are permitted)
  - If you make body contact with another player
  - Raise the blade above waist level when hitting the ball
  - Play the ball above the knee level with the stick
  - Hit, block, lift or kick (make contact) with an opponent's stick
  - Intentionally pass the ball back to your goaltender, and the goaltender picks the ball up
  - Play the ball with your stick between the opponent's legs
  - If an offensive player or their stick is in the goalie crease
  - Holding or obstructing another player from participating in the play (interference)

##### Penalty Shots

1. A Penalty Shot shall be awarded in the following situations:
  - When a player is fouled, tripped or interfered with on a breakaway
  - Throwing a stick - at a player during a breakaway
  - Delay of Game - Goaltender deliberately dislodging the goal during a breakaway
  - If a defensive player or their stick enters the goalie crease while the offensive team is in their end

##### Penalty "Box"

1. If players commit any of these violations, they will be asked to leave the playing area immediately for the mandated amount of time:
  - High sticking (2 minutes)
  - Makes body contact with another player (2 minutes)
  - Throwing objects at another player (5 minutes)
  - Unsportsmanlike Conduct (5 minutes – per officials ruling and athlete code of conduct)

- Pushing, hitting or tackling another player (20 minutes). This suspension is for the entirety of the game. Players may return to playing in the tournament afterward. However, any additional disciplinary penalty will result in them being suspended from the rest of the tournament.
- If a player has received 3 penalties during a game, they will be sidelined for the remainder of the game.

## 6. Officials

Each official match should be led and controlled by two referees with equal responsibility. The two main tasks of the referees are to make the game safe for everyone and to accept the goals. Another important focus for the referees is that the game should run smoothly, so it should be interrupted as seldom as possible. The key things to watch for are keeping sticks below the waist, no body contact, and only the goalie can be the crease. A copy of our official's guide can be found [here](#).

### Appendix A: Equipment

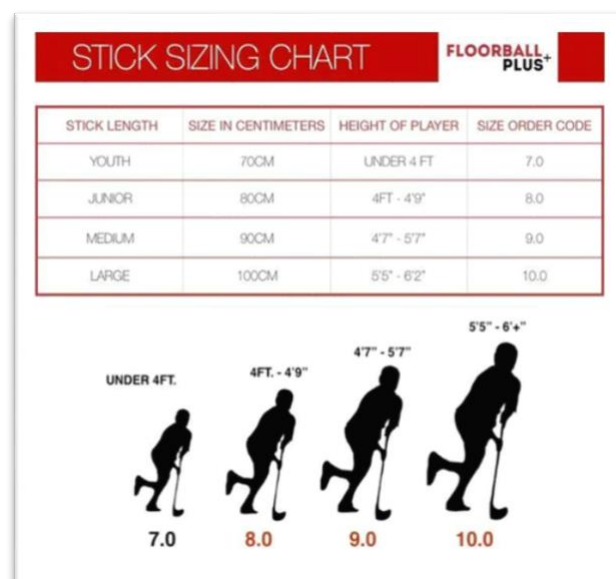
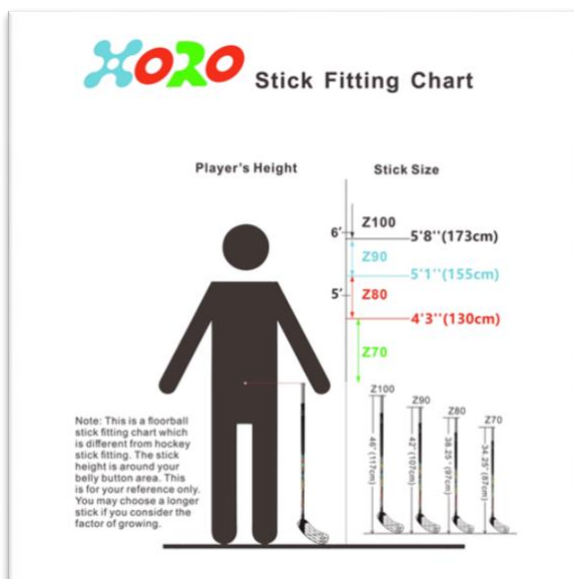
#### a. The Sticks

Sizing your stick is an important part of making sure the player can play to his/her best ability. Sticks can range from children (67cm to 82cm) to adults (87cm to 103cm). The measurement starts from the bottom of the shaft to the top of the stick, not including the blade itself. Sticks are either left or right-handed, which is determined by what hand is sitting lower on the stick when the player holds it. To decide which handedness is best for a player, typically, the dominant writing hand sits at the top of the stick; for example, A player whose dominant hand is right would shoot left in floorball.

Note: SOO stick lengths have been classified as Short (90 cm length) and Tall (100cm length) for ordering purposes.

- SOO athletes between 4'7" and 5'7" should select the short stick, and those 5'8" to 6'2" and above should get the tall stick.
- Stick costs from \$30 - \$100 per stick (our provider is \$30)

Our supplier is Accufli: <https://accufli.com>



**LEFT HANDED**



**RIGHT HANDED**



b. The Balls

*Floorballs are made of hard plastic with holes throughout. The ball is light, and its shape and density make it more susceptible to bouncing and moving quickly. Balls cost from \$1.50 - \$3.00, depending on the provider.*



c. The Goalie Equipment (note both options are acceptable for play)

1. Official Floorball Gear

Floorball goalies utilized certified and caged helmets, Protective padding underneath the jersey (Often recreationally, hockey shoulder pads and elbow pads can be used), Knee Pads underneath the pants (Often recreationally, volleyball pads can be used) , Gloves are not necessary, however often used to protect the hands (Often recreationally, baseball batters, running or football gloves can use)





## 2. Traditional Floor Hockey Gear

Traditional caged hockey CSA-approved helmets are used with the traditional chest protector, catcher blocker and leg padding.

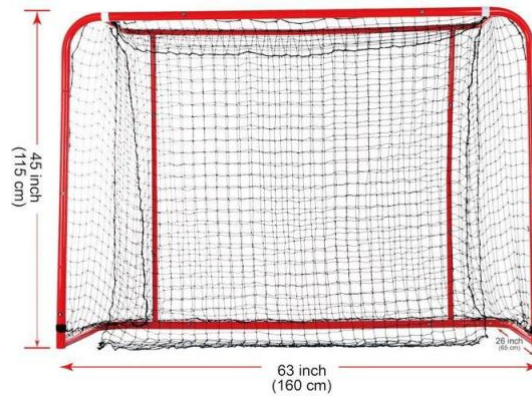


- d. The Nets (Traditional Floorball Nets and School Hockey Nets Will be Used) (Both Are Acceptable)

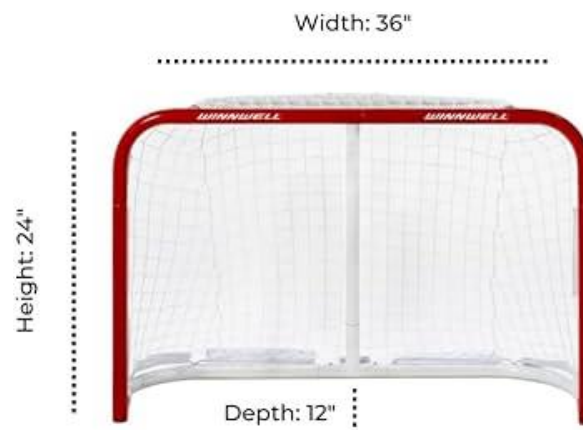
Note: *The goalie is responsible for placing the net back on the goal line if the net is moved.*

1. Official Floorball Nets

The net is similarly designed to a traditional hockey net. However, there are some differences. The net is considerably lighter and overall smaller in dimension. The posts are smaller, shorter in height (115cm / 45") and narrower in width (160cm / 63"). There is also an additional mesh hanging from the crossbar to prevent balls that enter the net from popping back out.



## 2. Traditional Floor Hockey Net

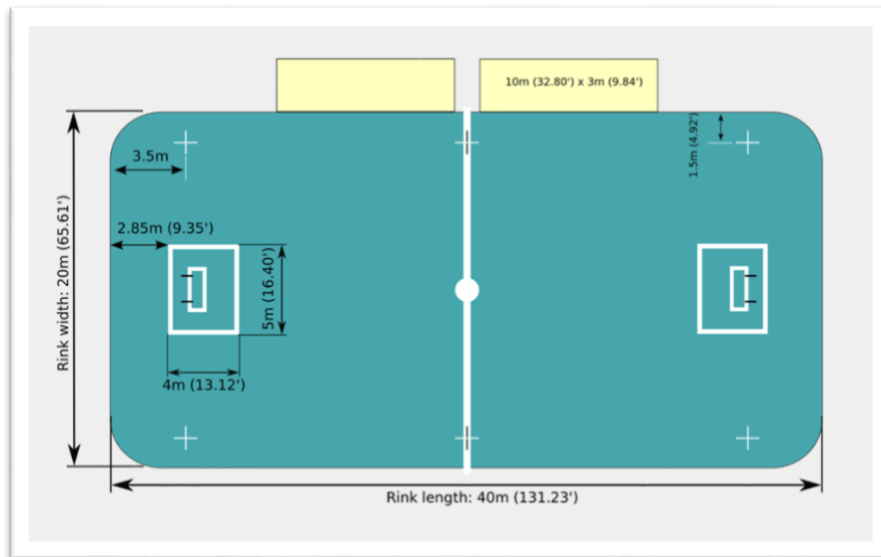


### e. The Courts (Traditional Floorball Size)

The court is built from a series of connected boards made of foam or plastic. In this case, where possible, wooden team benches or other approved materials. The height of the board can range up to 50 cm, and the corners are rounded, giving the players the opportunity to keep the ball in play. Players can use the boards to win advantage for their team.

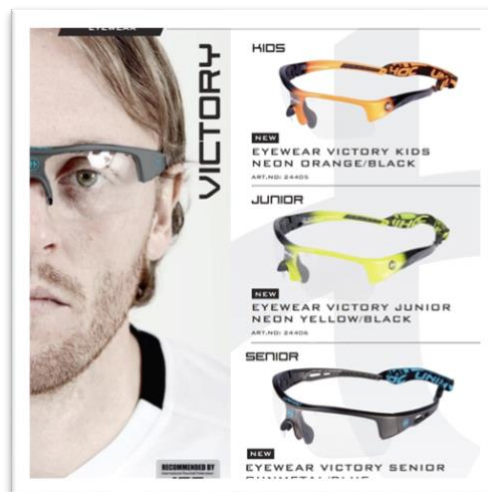
In International competitions, the court size has, from the beginning, been 40 x 20 m, and the goal size is 160 x 115 cm. The rules allow all rink sizes between 36 x 18 m and 44 x 22 m, as long as the rink formula is length = 2 x width. As mentioned, single and double gym sizes are feasible to host and practice for a competition.

A fully equipped rink also includes markings on the floor. Two goalkeeper areas, the center line, the center spot and the other six faceoff dots shall be marked on the floor. Both goals are surrounded by a goal area of 4 x 5 meters, and inside the goal area, there is a smaller goalkeeper crease of 1 x 2.5 meters, where only the goalkeeper can operate. *SOO does not have a goal area and will only utilize the goalie crease*



## f. Recommended Projective Gear

### 1. Protective Goggles



### 2. Shin Pads



### 3. Mouth Guard



## Appendix B: Resources

For more information on how to access equipment and how to play, referee, or organize the sport in your region, feel free to contact Floorball Canada at [info@floorballcanada.org](mailto:info@floorballcanada.org) or head to their [Website](#).



### RULES OF THE GAME

For a complete copy of the IFF (International Floorball Federation) "Rules of the Game - 2022" document, see the link [here](#). Note Special Olympics Ontario Rules differ significantly at this time.